Israel and the Atom Bomb, P. 2

Chet Huntley's Devastating Final Good Night To the White House

I've been with Nixon socially; I've travelled with him in his private plane; I've seen him under many conditions. The shallowness of the man overwhelms me; the fact that he is President frightens me.

—Chet Huntley interviewed on his retirement in Life Magazine July 17

I. F. Stone's Bi-Weekly

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How The Pentagon Poisons The Public Mind On SALT

Secretary Laird launched new alarms at his press conference of July 9. "Laird Says Soviet Builds Up ICBMs At An Intensive Rate," said a headline in the *New York Times* next day. "Reports A Broad Effort to Expand Offensive Force In Spite of Arms Parley." The impression created was that while we were trying to negotiate some limits on the arms race at the SALT talks in Vienna, the Russians were forging ahead. "They have developed more SS-9 missiles . . . They have proceeded with this program since the talks started at Helsinki," Secretary Laird told his press conference. "I would like not to confirm that," Laird added, "it would please me if I could report differently to you. But in all frankness, I must give you an honest answer." Whenever Laird sounds like Abraham Lincoln walking ten miles to return six cents, it is a good idea for the press corps quickly to feel its wallet pocket.

Contradicted By Intelligence Leaks

Unfortunately for Laird he was too clever for his purpose. For several months there have been leaks from the government's vast and varied intelligence establishment to the effect that the Russians, far from expanding their SS-9 force, had halted its development ever since last August, three months before the SALT talks opened in Helsinki. These intelligence leaks, whether from CIA, State Department or the not-always-monolithic Pentagon itself, achieved publication first in Stewart Alsop's column in *Newsweek* last April 27. He wrote that it was "a hopeful fact that U.S. intelligence has detected no new starts on the SS-9 launch sites, which take 18 months to complete, since last August." He added, "This may mean that the Soviets have already at least tentatively decided to halt SS-9 production at the present level, as part of a SALT agreement."

The alarmist headlines generated by the Laird press conference sent some of us back to the newly published testimony last May 28 of three former Presidential science advisers to the Gore disarmament subcommittee on the SALT talks. Dr. Kistiakowsky—who advised Eisenhower—submitted a chart showing that the curve of SS-9 deployment was flattening out. Dr. Jerome Wiesner, who served under Kennedy, suggested that the committee look at what the Soviets are "actually doing" and called its attention to a "persistent" intelligence story that "no new SS-9 sites under construction" had been observed for several months. Dr. Donald F. Hornig, who was Johnson's science adviser, volunteered that he thought the committee ought to look into this report and indicated that he took it seriously.

Laird's alarms boomeranged with newspapermen covering the Pentagon. George C. Wilson in the *Washington Post* and Neil Sheehan in the *New York Times* next day noted (in the words of the latter) that Laird's assertions "directly contradicted reports from senior Administration officials to the effect that the Soviet Union had constructed no new sites for SS-9s since last August." Next day those reporters with intelligence sources checked back with them and discovered that the SS-9 deployments had not been continuous during the SALT talks but had just been resumed. Apparently this was another Laird whopper. Chalmers Roberts in the *Washington Post* July 11 reported that as late as June 24, when America's chief negotiator Gerard C. Smith met with President Nixon "no new SS-9 starts had been discovered since prior to Helsinki."

It Certainly Has

In Cambodia the futility of expanded aggression has been demonstrated.

—Nixon's TV report on Cambodia June 30.

Pnom Penh—The U.S. effort to gather military information in Cambodia is being hampered because the Embassy here lacks a plane that would enable its eight military attaches to travel from Pnom Penh to isolated areas in the interior. Since none of Cambodia's roads are secure any longer, air travel is the only way information can be gathered first hand.

—New York Times dispatch from Cambodia July 12

Why had this nine-month hiatus in the deployment of the SS-9 never been publicly acknowledged by the Nixon Administration? Robert C. Toth in the *Los Angeles Times* July 11, after checking Laird against "authoritative sources" of his own, suggested that if the pause had been admitted "support might dwindle for the ABM phase-2 appropriations to be voted on in a few weeks." More important, Mr. Toth went on to speculate, "is whether the Russians were signalling deliberate restraint on multi-headed missiles with the SS-9 construction pause." He added that it was "arguable" that when the U.S. failed to respond and in fact went ahead with MIRV "only then did the Russians decide to resume deployment of SS-9s."

The one member of Congress to speak up as this is written was Jonathan B. Bingham, a Democrat from Riverdale, N.Y. In a one-minute speech plus revision of remarks he was allowed in the House July 13, Bingham pointed out that "three weeks after the first Minutemen were armed with MIRV, new SS-9 missile site starts were detected." Addressing Laird he asked, "Did you suppose for one moment that the Soviets would not go ahead with the SS-9 if the U.S. went ahead with the MIRV? Why did you never tell the American people about the long suspension of SS-9 starts, which might well have been interpreted as a sign of restraint calling for some reciprocal action?" Reciprocal action is just what Laird and the Pentagon chiefs feared. A Soviet resumption serves their purpose as an excuse to go forward with ABM and MIRV.

(Continued On Page Four)

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THE URGENCY OF FORCING Israel and the Arabs into peace negotiations is intensified by realization that the local conflict may sooner or later take on nuclear dimensions. We should all be indebted to Senator Symington for opening up the dread subject on CBS *Face The Nation* July 12 and to the *New York Times* for pursuing it with a Hedrick Smith story July 18 on the progress Israel seems to have made toward becoming a nuclear power. Senator Symington, who has access to classified information as a member of the Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committees, said, "I don't think there's any question about the fact that Israel is doing its best to develop nuclear weapons . . . And it would be a very relatively simple matter for the Soviet Union to give nuclear weapons to any of the Arab countries." When Mr. Smith investigated for the *New York Times* he came up with two alarming reports. One is that the Israelis in the original purchase of the 50 Phantom-4 planes in December 1969 asked the Pentagon to equip some of them with racks for nuclear bombs. The other was that an attempt to make Israel sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Pact as a condition of the plane deal was abandoned on White House instructions after the Israelis objected.

The day after the *Times* story, Israel's Ambassador to the U.S., Itzhak Rabin, was on *Meet The Press*. He was an evasive witness, a humorless hard-liner. He is a Lieut. Gen. who was Israel's commander in the June war. If men of his mentality make Israeli policy we are all heading for trouble. He said Israeli policy was not to be the first to introduce nuclear arms into the Middle East. He was then asked why, if that were true, Israel had not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Pact. He never gave a clear answer. It was under study. It was a complicated question. He was not a scientist, etc.

One does not need to be a scientist or to take more than a year of study (as Israel's government has) to realize that nothing could be worse for Israel, the Middle East and the world than the injection of nuclear arms into this inflamed area. It was bad enough to commit the folly of bombing Cairo — thus bringing Soviet SAM-3s and pilots into the area. It would be worse if some day Arab fear of Israeli nuclear weapons brought Soviet nuclear arms and Soviet technicians to handle them, into the Middle East.

This is the direction in which we are heading, and I think the American Jewish community should become aware of it and help impose restraint on hard-liners like Rabin. He was much too complacent about linking Isreal to a "global struggle." It is time, for Israel's good and the world's, to step up the pressure for a settlement as part of a different global struggle, a struggle for disengagement and detente in which humanity can move away from the nuclear brink. An atom-free Middle East is far better for Israel's future than a temporary advantage in being the first to produce the weapons of suicide.

Just What Cyrus Eaton Meant

The abrupt resignation of seven Penn Central directors because of conflicts of interest arising from their affiliation with financial institutions holding Penn Central loans points to the necessity for legislative reform. Officers of banks and insurance companies should not be permitted to be directors of corporations to which they lend money. Not involved in the Penn Central case, but relating to the conflict of interest problem, is the reprehensible practice of bank officers perpetuating themselves in office by voting the stock of their own bank held in a fiduciary capacity. This abuse should be prohibited by law.

—Cyrus Eaton, chairman of the board of the C.&O. RR to the Joint Economic Committee July 13

While the nation's largest railroad plunged toward financial disaster in 1969 and early 1970, fifteen Penn Central executives took action that was to save them substantial sums as the company's stock price plummeted in succeeding months. These corporate insiders unloaded more than 40,000 of their Penn Central shares for an estimated total of more than $2 million. The prices received per share, mostly ranging between $40 and $70, were far above the stock's recent low of $5.62. This insider selling occurred at a time when the investing public was only dimly aware, if at all, that the Penn Central Transportation Co. was in big trouble.

—Fred Zimmerman, *Wall Street Journal*, July 14

WE HOPE SOME PUBLISHER will commission Thomas R. Harkin to tell the full story of Con San prison and of his decision to resign and expose it rather than let a House investigating commission white-wash it. The full story would tell a lot not only about Vietnam but about the habits which keep bureaucrats and Congressmen from telling the truth. Rep. Conyers of Detroit told the House July 16 that the U.S. Study Team on Political and Religious Freedom in Vietnam on which he served gave Henry Kissinger a report on Con San in June 1969 and that there have been at least four other reports since, one by an International Red Cross team made available to both Nixon and Thieu and separate reports by the South Vietnamese Senate and Assembly on the torture of students. Yet Frank Walton, chief American adviser on public safety in Saigon, compared Con San to a "Boy Scout recreation camp"!

Cyrus Eaton Warns Nixon Of Hoover's Fate If The War Is Not Speedily Ended

The Nixon Administration was elected on the strength of a purported but still undisclosed plan to terminate the war in Vietnam. Three of the key figures in the Administration, the President, the Secretary of State and the Attorney General, are Wall Street lawyers who have been closely associated with the problems of corporate and municipal finance. Their failure to recognize the portents of impending economic doom and to conclude the rash military adventure responsible for those portents is incredible.

As a concerned capitalist, I have communicated my misgivings to the Administration. Last November, when Bell Telephone bonds were sold at the, up to then, highest interest rates in American corporate history, I called this to President Nixon's attention. My message stated: "Unless there are immediate and drastic changes in our foreign policies, I feel we are headed for a panic that could destroy the Nixon Administration even as the debacle of 1929 destroyed the political career of Herbert Hoover."

If the President will not act, then Congress must. This nation simply cannot afford to continue spending $80 billion a year for military purposes. The $25 billion included in that budget for the Vietnam adventure is money completely down the drain, while much of the remainder goes for the development and production of weapons that would extinguish the human race if ever used.

Less than a week ago I received a letter from Viscount Montgomery. The great general makes this judgment on President Nixon's conduct of the war in Vietnam: "He should realize that a political end to the war in Vietnam is the only possible way to end that war."

The allegation that North Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam will not negotiate is not in accord with the facts. I suggest for the Congress' consideration that a small committee of the Senate and House meet informally in Canada or in France with a similar group from North Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

—Mr. Eaton to the Joint Economic Committee July 13 (abr)

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WITH SUCH ALLIES, WHO NEEDS ENEMIES DEPT: The Thai mission to the UN issued an angry press release June 29 that no one printed attacking Sen. Symington. It asked, "Who made Thailand vulnerable to the Chinese Communists?" and answered "The Americans, by putting 7 enormous air bases there." Do the Thais want us to conclude that they'd be safer if we withdrew? . . . "TURKS ANGRY AT U.S.," a dispatch to the *Washington Star* reported July 19, "Over Curbs On Opium." Apparently this NATO ally would feel happier if more Americans took dope . . . LOOKS LIKE NIXON RISKS JAIL if he returns to Saigon: The AP reported July 19 that Nixon was preparing to work out fresh initiatives for the Paris talks with his new Paris negotiator, Bruce, looking toward some form of coalition settlement. The same day on CBS *Face The Nation,* Thieu said "anyone who talks about coalition should be put in jail" . . .

THE BASTION OF FREEDOM BADLY NEEDS EDUCATION IN WHAT FREEDOM MEANS: An AP reporter in Miami spent July 4 approaching pedestrians with a copy of the Declaration of Independence and asking them to sign. Only one man out of 50 agreed. Two called it "Commie junk." Another warned, "Be careful who you show that kind of anti-government stuff to, Buddy." Similar experiments on other occasions with the Bill of Rights indicates how poorly educated most Americans are in the fundamentals of the freedom we claim to be defending elsewhere . . . THIS SEEMS TO APPLY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, TOO in overruling State Dept. and refusing an entry visa to Mrs. Shirley Graham DuBois. The refusal is a slap in the face of the black community for she is the widow of W.E.B. DuBois. It is also an affront to freedom and decency. She was born in New York 71 years ago and later became a citizen of Ghana to escape the McCarthy period witch hunt. Mitchell's men think she's too "subversive" to be allowed reentry to her native country . . . WE APPLAUD JAMES J. KILPATRICK, a conservative columnist, for exposing the "Dusseldorf Rules For Revolution," now circulating widely in rightist circles, as a patent fraud. It takes courage to affront some of one's own constituency . . . TWO BIRCHITES have been elected to Congress from California as Republicans. Imagine the outcry if two Communists were elected as Democrats.

DEPT. OF PENITENCE: Sen. Young of Ohio was misled in the speech we reported in our last issue and we did James Reston of the *New York Times* an injustice in reporting it without investigation. Not only did Reston resist White House pressure to hush up the 100-plane bombing raid on North Vietnam at the beginning of May but he also disclosed (May 4) the efforts made by the White House to keep reporters from printing the fact that the raid occurred. Apologies and bravo! We were also wrong in saying the AP ticker did not carry Richard Barnet's press conference warning against the use of atomic bombs in Indochina. It's just that neither I, Barnet nor anyone else we talked with ever saw it in print. Sorry.

HATS OFF: To the Australian newspaperman Peter Arnett and the German photographer Horst Faas about to be reassigned by the AP out of South Vietnam after years in which they have provided the bravest and the most independent coverage of the war. We owe Faas that heart-rending picture of a Vietnamese father with a napalm-burned son in his arms. Arnett said he had hoped to cover the end of the war, but now feels that it will go on for years. That offhand remark from the reporter least taken in by U.S. propaganda all these years is an item to file but not to forget.

AGONY FOOTNOTE: How keep the young in line to work within "the system" when they see the obscene spectacle of the Democratic leadership in the House joining hands with the White House to allow only 7 minutes of debate before voting down the Cooper-Church amendment. This is oligarchy and gerontocracy rather than democracy.

The Black Soldier In Vietnam

The militant young black soldier in Vietnam is one of the war's touchiest aspects. I was always suspiciously regarded by top brass whenever I talked to black soldiers apart from their officers.

Even in the military stockade at Long Bien when I requested the opportunity to meet privately with soldiers from my own state, the group assembled for me did not contain a single black soldier although 61 percent of the stockade population is black.

When asked the reason for this high percentage, Colonel Jones, the Confinement Officer, himself a Negro replied: "The black soldier is anti-establishment and anti-war." I suppose in this respect our black soldiers and South Vietnamese people are soul brothers. But other reasons may lie beneath: racial bias, unequal assignment, double standards, and a lack of understanding at the command level.

—Rep. Augustus F. Hawkins, (D.-Calif), filing Supplemental Views to Report of the Select Committee on US Involvement in Southeast Asia, Cong. Rec. July 7.

From Professionalism To Pot: How The Army In Vietnam Has Changed In Five Years

It is almost exactly five years since I first arrived in Vietnam. In 1965, when the American buildup was just getting under way, the troops seemed mostly to be paratroopers and Marines. The haircuts were all short and discipline could be pretty strict. Even a couple of years ago GI's in some outfits were being given six months in jail for smoking pot. Now, as one wanders about the country, it looks like a different army. Half the troops in the field seem to be wearing peace symbols around their necks and everywhere they greet each other with the V-for-peace sign.

A lot of GI's, an awful lot of GI's, are casually smoking pot. Even officially the army seems to be facing up to the facts. The ones who are caught get off with much lighter sentences these days—a $50 fine being pretty typical. "We can't put them in jail or we wouldn't have any people left out here (in the field)," one officer said.

The force now in Vietnam—especially in the combat units—is also now overwhelmingly draftee rather than regular army. The troops say their companies are generally 80 to 90 percent draftees. And the draftees complain that the regulars and veterans by now have pretty well managed to get assigned to safe and comfortable rear area jobs.

Instead of all the moral arguments one hears among student protesters, one hears from the GI's talk about how pointless the war is and how it can't be won anyhow so why get hurt or killed. "I think they're against the army and the whole system more than (the politics of) the war," said Specialist-4 Robert Mantell, 25, who has a master's degree in political science and whose father is a career colonel. "It's a stupid war," said another GI who worked in campaigns for both Goldwater and Reagan before getting drafted and still considers himself something of a conservative. "Our battalion commander will tell you that we'll have ambushes set out tonight," he said, "and maybe he'll even believe it. But there won't be any. The Grunts will call in by radio and say they've set up at the ambush point. But they'll really check into some ARVN compound and smoke pot and make out with the boom-boom girls."

—Raymond Coffey from Saigon, Wash. Star, *July 12* (abr.)

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The Same Falsifications in the Laird-Foster Talks to AP and ANPA

(Continued From Page One)

The Pentagon not only withheld information on the Soviet pause but there is now evidence that it gave false information about SS-9 deployments last winter to the Senate Armed Services Committee. Dr. John S. Foster, the Pentagon's research chief, as slick an operator as Laird himself, was before the committee in closed session last Feb. 24. A series of written questions was submitted to him by Senator Symington.*

The Second-Rate Power Nonsense

Symington pointed out that Nixon had said he was determined "to postpone additional actions on U.S. offensive systems this year in order to advance prospects for success at SALT." Symington wanted to know how Dr. Foster reconciled this with budget requests for MIRVing Minuteman III and our Polaris submarines. "It would undercut our position in SALT," Dr. Foster said in his written reply on p. 254, "if we took unilateral action to not continue with these programs. *This is particularly true in view of the fact that the Soviet Union is continuing deployment of SS-9s . . .*" [Italics added] That was the end of February. No new starts on the SS-9 had been sighted since August. Two months later Secretary Laird on April 20 and Dr. Foster on April 23 made speeches respectively to the editors of the Associated Press and to the American Newspaper Publishers Association in which they said America was in danger of becoming a second rate power as the Soviet Union, despite the SALT talks, forged ahead in offensive and defensive missiles. Neither mentioned that no new starts on the SS-9 had been sighted for eight months.* How can any real success be expected from the SALT talks with men like Laird and Foster in the high command?

*** The Senator seems more than skeptical of Pentagon statements. At pps. 1712-14 of last year's Armed Services Committee hearings, he confronted Dr. Foster with a series of questions Symington had put to the CIA on the SS-9 and asked Dr. Foster for his own answer to each of these questions. Both the CIA and Dr. Foster's answers are heavily censored to remove all contradictions and discrepancies but it is clear from the context that they differed. Further evidence of Dr. Foster's tendency to indulge in alarms not justified by the intelligence establishment may be seen at p. 1790 of last year's hearings where he says in discussing the SS-9 "Although the National Intelligence Estimates are the basis of this discussion, I will consider *possibilities which are not part of the current estimates.*" [Italics added]. This means basing budgets and alarms on iffy possibilities beyond those the intelligence agencies thought likely.**

Tortuous Evasions and Bleak Outlook

Q. Mr. Secretary, while you were in London you said you thought the probable outcome of the conflict in South Vietnam would be a state of no war and no peace. This leaves a very serious question as to whether the American people now look forward to a very prolonged commitment of American troops to that country . . . A. I did not say that was my prediction. I did say that is a possibility . . .

Q. Does the Administration believe that it can't complete its Vietnamization process—that is, withdraw all American troops—until there is a political settlement? A. No. I don't think that's the case. The President has never made any statement about our plans for withdrawal beyond next spring and we don't intend to . . .

Q. I take it . . . that President Thieu does not buy what President Nixon said on April 20 [that he did not insist upon an election but was ready to accept a settlement reached some other way] and that the only formula he [Thieu] agrees to is the election formula.

A. No, I didn't say that. I just said he hadn't said one way or the other and I don't think he should.

Q. Well you said before you left that you were going to talk about the possibility of new initiatives. The stories from out there indicated that you got a rather negative reaction from the Saigon government.

A. No, that isn't correct and I have a witness [indicating Mr. McCloskey, his chief press officer].

[Laughter.] It's quite incorrect . . . no decision has been made . . . but I must say that President Thieu has been very cooperative . . .

Q. Well, Mr. Secretary, can you say now whether the U.S. does plan new diplomatic initiatives on the Vietnam problem?

A. Well, not beyond what I've said. We're considering them.

—Secretary of State Rogers July 15.

* See my ***Memo To the AP Editors: How Laird Lied*** **in the *New York Review* June 4. No AP editor incidentally has yet shown any sign of caring that he was lied to.**

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